

## Detrimental Citizenship Behaviour: A Multilevel Framework of Antecedents and Consequences

Jason R. Pierce<sup>1</sup> and Herman Aguinis<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Adolfo Ibáñez University, Chile, and <sup>2</sup>Indiana University, USA

**ABSTRACT** There is regular and explicit media coverage of employee behaviour intended to advance organizational goals, but that harms stakeholder interests in ways that exceed necessity and reason. Although several constructs such as workplace deviance, organizational misbehaviour, corporate crime and corruption, and unethical pro-organizational behaviour have been advanced to account for this type of behaviour, no comprehensive framework exists that also includes the full scope of its important consequences. Accordingly, we propose the umbrella construct of detrimental citizenship behaviour (DCB) that allows us to integrate and build upon previous related conceptualizations that have developed mostly in parallel bodies of research. We rely on ethical decision-making, creativity, and instrumental stakeholder theories to embed the umbrella DCB construct within a multi-level and longitudinal model. The DCB model includes processes through which such behaviour and its consequences unfold over time for organizational members, organizations, and society at large. The proposed framework describes, explains, and predicts DCB and also leads to suggestions for future research. In addition, we offer suggestions regarding how to manage this highly consequential type of organizational behaviour, thereby engaging in a much-needed science-practice dialogue in management and organization studies.

**KEYWORDS** behavioural ethics, citizenship behaviour, ethics, pro-organizational behaviour, stakeholder theory

### INTRODUCTION

*The road to Hell is paved with good intentions. – John Ray (1670)*

*Royal Caribbean Cruises employees tried to hide violations [from] Coast Guard officials . . . the ship's first engineer, Sverre Roeymo, ordered the removal and destruction of a pipe used to bypass . . . a required pollution control device . . . [and] . . . Chief engineer Henry Ericksen is accused of ordering a crew member to lie to the Coast Guard and a federal grand jury. Roeymo faces up to 30 years in prison or a \$1 million fine . . . [and] . . . Ericksen could be sentenced to up to 25 years in prison and a \$750,000 fine (Brown, 1996). Royal Caribbean pleaded guilty and was sentenced to pay \$27 million in fines and . . . probation for five years (Stieghorst, 1999).*

*A strip search of a 13-year-old girl by officials at her middle school violated the Constitution, the Supreme Court ruled . . . in an 8-to-1 decision . . . Savana Redding had been suspected of bringing prescription-strength ibuprofen to the school. Justice Souter, writing for the majority, said a search of Ms. Redding's backpack and outer garments did not offend the Fourth Amendment's ban on unreasonable searches, [b]ut the pills in question . . . did not justify an "embarrassing, frightening and humiliating search." School officials ordered Ms. Redding, whom another girl had accused of giving her drugs, to strip to her bra and underpants and to pull them away from her body, exposing her breasts and pelvic area. No drugs were found (Liptak, 2009).*

*Police in China's southwestern city of Chongqing detained and have formally arrested two [Wal-Mart employees] . . . as part of their investigation into whether [they] fraudulently marked ordinary pork as organic . . . The two under arrest are the vice president and the fresh-food director of the Jiulong Wal-Mart outlet in Chongqing. The . . . retailer temporarily closed all of its stores . . . after Chongqing officials ordered Wal-Mart to shutter outlets for 15 days. Authorities also fined Wal-Mart 3.65 million yuan, or about \$575,000, alleging the retailer sold . . . mislabeled pork (Burkitt, 2011).*

On the surface, the preceding accounts appear to have little more in common than the unlawful nature of the stories. The first one portrays obstruction of justice in an investigation of illegal dumping, the second highlights a violation of civil rights while enforcing zero-tolerance drug policies, and the third reveals a ruse to make extra profits by deceiving customers. What these narratives share, however, is that the employees involved took pro-organizational actions that unacceptably contravened legitimate stakeholder interests. That is, in each case, the employees prioritized immediate organizational goals (i.e., increasing profits and enforcing policies) ahead of concern for stakeholders, resulting in outcomes that were ultimately detrimental to both.

In the wake of regular and explicit media coverage of incidents like the ones described above, scholars have proposed several related but distinct constructs that account for pro-organizational behaviour that harms stakeholders in unreasonable and unnecessary ways. These theoretical frameworks, however, tend to only address a subset of this type of problematic behaviour (e.g., violations of law; Baucus, 1994) or account for its causes and consequences only at one level of analysis (e.g., at the individual level of analysis; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Consequently, we lack a cohesive, integrated, multi-level model for this class of problematic pro-organizational behaviours and their multi-level antecedents and consequences.

The purpose of the present article, therefore, is to integrate the extant literature under an overarching, multi-level, longitudinal theoretical framework and, in so doing, set the stage for future research. To achieve this objective, we first introduce and define an umbrella construct that we call *detrimental citizenship behaviour* (DCB). This introduction includes a review of previously proposed constructs for unacceptable pro-organizational behaviour and an explanation of how they fit under the DCB umbrella. We then propose models for DCB's causes and consequences that include mediating (i.e., underlying process) and moderating

(i.e., contingency) effects. We integrate decision-making theory to account for the different psychological processes through which DCB can occur. In addition, we establish a model of DCB's consequences on instrumental stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jones, 1995) to address how DCB's consequences unfold over time depending upon exogenous events.

Our examination of DCB makes the following contributions. First, we advance the literature by integrating and building upon previous investigations (Robertson, 1993) as others have done (e.g., Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Vardi & Wiener, 1996; Warren, 2003). In addition to creating cohesion in a somewhat disconnected literature, our expanded perspective on the causes and consequences of DCB answers calls to account for a broader range of antecedents (e.g., emotions; Vardi & Wiener, 1996) and to incorporate multiple levels of analysis in framework for unethical forms of pro-organizational behaviour (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Our work also has potential for advancing broader management and organizational theory by bridging micro- and macro-organizational phenomena that unfold over time (Aguinis, Boyd, Pierce, & Short, 2011; Van Maanen, Sørensen, & Mitchell, 2007). Finally, and more generally, our integrative theoretical framework answers calls to study issues of concern for practitioners and society in general (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008).

## **DETRIMENTAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR (DCB)**

Major research themes in management and organization studies have coalesced around organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), which is pro-social and benefits organizations, and counterproductive work behaviour (CWB), which is antisocial and harms them (Dalal, 2005). A related yet distinct and more nascent literature includes multiple concepts, constructs, and frameworks proposed to understand the causes and consequences of employees violating norms and stakeholder interests in the pursuit of organizational objectives (e.g., Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Vardi & Wiener, 1996; Warren, 2003). We propose an umbrella construct, DCB, to integrate these frameworks.

We define DCB as discretionary employee behaviour that goes beyond reason and necessity to promote specific organizational goals and, in so doing, harms legitimate stakeholder interests. For behaviour to qualify as DCB, it must involve a combination of: (i) discretion – it must lie outside of the employee's normal role behaviours and expectations; (ii) organizational benefit – its intended outcome must be beneficial for the organization; and (iii) unreasonable or unnecessary harm – it must undermine stakeholders' legitimate interests in unjustifiable ways. These elements are shared by constructs in at least three interrelated but somewhat independent and parallel research domains. We review these domains and explain how integrating them under the umbrella DCB construct will lead to more precise and parsimonious models as well as provide promising directions for future research.

### **Workplace Deviance as DCB**

The general domain of workplace deviance – behaviours that exceed or violate established workplace or societal norms (e.g., Robinson & Bennett, 1995) – includes constructs that fit our definition of DCB. Vardi and Wiener (1996: 153) proposed and defined a construct they called organizational misbehaviour (OMB) ‘any intentional action by members of organizations that defies and violates (i) shared organizational norms and expectations, and/or (ii) core societal values, mores and standards of proper conduct’. They subcategorized OMB into three types: (i) OMB Type S – intended to benefit the self (e.g., falsifying time sheets, embezzlement); (ii) OMB Type O – intended to benefit the organization (e.g., lying to customers); and (iii) OMB Type D – OMB intended to damage or harm. Although OMB Type O falls directly under our umbrella construct of DCB, some versions of OMB Type S also fit since it includes deviant acts that benefit both the individual and the organization.

Warren (2003) extended the workplace deviance literature by arguing that workplace deviance should be categorized according to two dimensions: (i) how it aligns with both organizational norms and normative standards (e.g., hypernorms; Donaldson & Dunfee, 1994); and (ii) the direction in which it aligns (positively or negatively). With respect to the second dimension, she argued that positive deviance includes behaviours that are consistent with relevant norms, yet exceed them in desirable ways (e.g., OCB). The resulting taxonomy provides four separate categories of behaviours: (i) constructive-conformity, which aligns positively with both organizational and hypernorms; (ii) destructive-deviance, which violates both; (iii) constructive-deviance, which violates organizational norms yet upholds societal ones (e.g., whistleblowing); and (iv) destructive-conformity, which aligns with organizational norms, but violates universal ones (e.g., tacitly sanctioned bribery). Of these, the second or fourth categories include behaviours that constitute DCB.

To summarize, the DCB umbrella includes OMB Types O and S as well as destructive-deviance because these classes of behaviour unnecessarily or unreasonably (i.e., by violating ‘core societal values, mores and standards of proper conduct’) harm legitimate stakeholder interests. However, DCB is also broader and more inclusive than these concepts because it is defined independently of its alignment with organizational norms or other normative standards.

### **Corporate Crime and Corruption as DCB**

Corporate crime and corruption research focuses exclusively on violations of laws. Though investigators in this domain have traditionally grouped crimes committed against organizations together with crimes committed for them (Sutherland, 1940), scholars have more recently been careful to distinguish between the two (Pinto, Leana, & Pil, 2008). Additionally, some organizational crime experts (e.g., Baucus, 1994) dichotomize acts committed for organizations according to intentionality.

While some organizationally beneficial legal violations are accidental and without awareness (e.g., failing to comply out of ignorance), others are deliberate (e.g., intentionally dumping bilge waste to save money). It is this latter category of crime that falls under the DCB umbrella.

Governments, particularly ones in which democratic systems are in place, regulate organizational activities specifically to protect legitimate stakeholder interests. Thus, deliberate violation of these measures constitutes DCB. Though legal standards often overlap with ethical ones, the ethical standard is generally broader. In this way, the scope of the DCB umbrella extends more broadly than intentionally illegal pro-organizational behaviour.

### **Unethical Behaviour as DCB**

Umphress and her colleagues (Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress, Bingham, & Mitchell, 2010) made important contributions to the business ethics literature by proposing the construct of unethical pro-organizational behaviour (UPB). They defined UPB as ‘actions that are intended to promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members (e.g., leaders) and violate core societal values, mores, laws, or standards of proper conduct’ (Umphress & Bingham, 2011: 622). Umphress and Bingham (2011: 624) differentiated UPB from OMB by exclusively focusing on behaviours that have negative implications for ‘entities other than the organization’ by violating societal or universal normative standards, regardless of their alignment with organizational norms. Thus, UPB is also a type of DCB because it benefits organizations yet violates widely held, legitimate social norms.

The DCB umbrella construct includes but also extends beyond Umphress and Bingham’s (2011) concept of UPB. DCB includes UPB in the same way that it includes the related concepts of OMB Type O and S (i.e., by violating hypernorms; Donaldson & Dunfee, 1994). However, DCB extends beyond the scope of UPB in two important ways. First, it includes obsessive or extreme forms of adherence to rules or normative standards that can lead to violation of legitimate stakeholder interests. Second, Umphress and Bingham (2011:624) distinguished their concept of UPB from related concepts (e.g., OMB Type O) by basing their conceptualization on social exchange theory (i.e., ‘how positive social exchange can encourage unethical behavior intended to benefit the organization’). We make no such distinction regarding DCB. Rather we present a more general causal explanation which accounts for and goes beyond positive social exchange as an antecedent of all forms of DCB.

### **Other Harmful Behaviours as DCB**

Molinsky and Margolis (2005: 247) drew attention to the phenomenon of *necessary evils* in the workplace — work-related tasks ‘in which an individual must . . . perform an act that causes emotional or physical harm to another human being in the service of achieving some perceived greater good or purpose’. Both necessary evils

and DCB involve inflicting harm that is generally considered ‘impermissible’ (e.g., dispossessing someone of property or liberty) in the service of a perceived greater good (e.g., pursuing organizational objectives). Unlike DCB, however, necessary evils are role prescribed and justifiable under the circumstances. In contrast, we contend that DCB, which is neither, could be considered a form of *unnecessary* evil.

Thinking of DCB as an unnecessary evil allows us to account for additional forms of problematic discretionary behaviour such as using deliberate and strict adherence to organizational rules in unreasonable and unnecessary ways. By refusing to do anything more than required (e.g., not working overtime), employees can create problems for their organizations or the stakeholders thereof. When such work-to-rule behaviour promotes organizational objectives (e.g., refusing to provide a refund or replacement due to a technicality), it qualifies as DCB. For example, US Airways recently received unfavourable worldwide media attention because a cash-strapped customer spent eight days living in San Francisco International Airport after gate agents, in strict adherence to the rules, refused to waive a baggage fee, to allow her to pay it at her arrival city, or to allow her to abandon one of her extra bags (*The New Paper*, 2011). Paradoxically, it would be difficult to categorize such work-to-rule behaviour as deviant, unethical, or illegal because, though harmful, it conforms to explicit rules and norms (Napier, 1972). Nevertheless, such strict adherence to rules unreasonably and unnecessarily violates legitimate stakeholder interests as suggested by media coverage and subsequent legislation against the hidden fees in question.

## DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES LEADING TO DCB

In this section, we integrate theories of ethical decision-making and creativity to present a model for the decision-making processes that lead to DCB. As shown in [Figure 1](#), the path to DCB begins when individuals encounter organizationally consequential situations (e.g., risk of prosecution and sanctions for illegal dumping). Such situations are necessary conditions for DCB to occur because they provide both the opportunity to promote organizational interests and activate the motivation to do so (Blumberg & Pringle, 1982). These situations are not sufficient for DCB to occur because employees must decide how to respond to them. DCB only occurs when organizational members decide to respond by pursuing or protecting significant organizational interests in ways that unreasonably undermine legitimate stakeholder interests.

Cognitive neuroscience research suggests that all decision-making processes, including those that lead to DCB, are triggered by a persistent cycle of information search and structuring (Reynolds, 2006a). This cycle continually analyzes environmental stimuli by arranging them into patterns and attempting to match those patterns against known prototypes. The outcome of the matching process can vary across situations due to time pressures and contextual cues because it requires that prototypes be established in memory, categorized (i.e., associated with value and emotion), and accessible in memory. When this process yields a

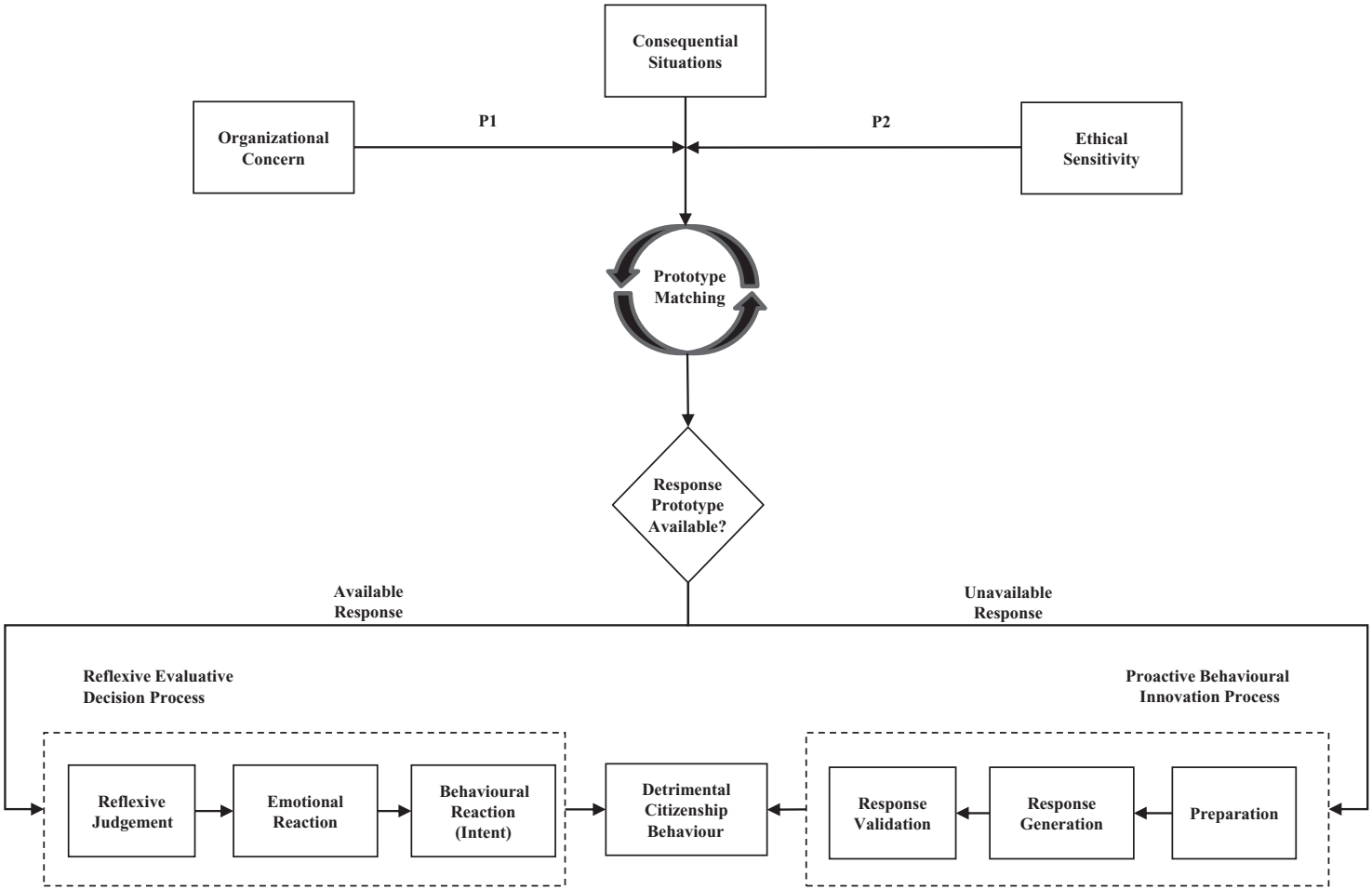


Figure 1. Decision-making processes leading to Detrimental Citizenship Behaviour



satisfactory match of stimuli to stored prototypes, reflexive judgments and responses are activated in the conscious mind with little to no effortful thought required. Conversely, when this process fails to yield a satisfactory match to known patterns, more resource-intensive cognitive processes are activated to analyze the situation and generate a response to it. These developments have led researchers to rethink formerly popular, rational ethical decision making (EDM) models (Jones, 1991; Rest, 1986) that only accounted for the latter, and replace them with models of reflexive or intuitive systems that emphasize the former (Haidt, 2001; Reynolds, 2006a; Sonenshein, 2007). We propose, then, that DCB can result from either type of decision-making process, respectively a *reflexive evaluative decision-making process* or a *proactive behavioural innovation process*.

### **Reflexive Evaluative Decision-making Process**

People make many, if not most, of their behavioural decisions reflexively rather than through controlled, conscious thought (Chen & Bargh, 1999). That is, individuals tend to respond to stimuli intuitively choosing whichever response spontaneously occurs to them in the moment without much deliberation. This natural tendency persists even in ethical decisions such as those that lead to DCB (Reynolds, 2006a). This path to DCB is a *reflexive evaluative decision* process and best explains the actions of the principal in the schoolgirl – Savana Redding – case described at the beginning of our manuscript.

As described earlier, the first step in the reflexive evaluative decision-making process occurs when the pattern-matching cycle associates environmental stimuli with a known prototype (e.g., student possession and use of drugs on school grounds). The next step in the process following a match is a reflexive judgment (Reynolds, 2006a). Reflexive judgments happen automatically and subconsciously. Moreover, they only include aspects of situations that are prototype-matched (e.g., threat to student safety). If the prototype-matching only includes aspects that pertain to self-interest (e.g., indirect threat to the principal's job) or the interests of others (e.g., colleagues, clients, one's organization), then the reflexive evaluation will only be made based on those concerns. Reflexive evaluations leading to DCB can occur quickly without consideration of ethical implications despite their presence or gravity (Murnighan, Cantelon, & Elyashiv, 2001).

The immediate output of the reflexive judgment is an emotional experience. Emotions are tightly integrated with intuitive situational judgments, especially dilemmatic ones that put the legitimate interests of various parties in conflict (Greene, Sommerville, Nystrom, Darley, & Cohen, 2001; Krebs & Denton, 2005). Emotions play a fundamental role in human behaviour because they energize basic approaches or avoid reactions to external stimuli (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Chen & Bargh, 1999), such as opportunities to engage in discretionary employee behaviour like DCB (Spector & Fox, 2002). The type of emotion that is experienced will determine the behavioural intention established that, in turn, will determine the



behavioural outcome. The exact behavioural outcomes, however, vary depending on other factors (e.g., individual differences; see section *Motivation-Based Moderators* later in our manuscript). The same emotion (e.g., agitation), thus, could drive individuals to 'behave in ways that help the organization to counteract a threat to its existence . . .' by either ' . . . working vigorously to bring a new product to the market more quickly or . . . more counterproductively . . .' by ' . . . engaging in sabotage' (Brockner & Higgins, 2001: 56) (i.e., engage in DCB).

### **Proactive Behavioural Innovation Process**

Because employees may also respond to non-routine organizationally consequential situations by engaging in creative and innovative processes to generate or apply novel and useful ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994), we integrate Amabile's (1988, 1996) model of creativity into our model. Though Amabile (1996: 97) discussed her model's applicability to technical problem-solving and artistic development, she left open the possibility that it applies to other innovative and potentially surprising behaviours (e.g., crimes, acts of kindness). Indeed, this type of creative process best explains how Rockwell scientists decided to devise and conduct a bogus 'experiment' to relieve their department of a rocket fuel that they could not legally possess, ship, or burn (Knight, 1996).

Amabile's model consists of five steps. The first is identifying a problem that needs to be solved. In our model, this step is represented as identification of a consequential situation (e.g., risk of prosecution, drug-related threat to student safety) and is shared with the first step in the reflexive evaluative process described above. The creative decision-making process is activated in the conscious mind, however, if the situation and a response thereto cannot be satisfactorily matched to extant prototypes. In the absence of an accessible prototype, the second step occurs in which organizational members prepare themselves by making relevant information accessible in memory through research or recall. They cognitively switch from more efficient and rapid reflexive to slower, more deliberate information processing. This stage is similar to what is colloquially known as 'putting one's thinking cap on'. Third, they generate potential responses. Response generation involves thinking of and recording or proposing courses of action that could be taken to address the situation. This step can occur alone or in groups (e.g., brainstorming). Fourth, would-be organizational citizens compare their potential solutions with criteria for success (i.e., response validation). Criteria for success could include impact on the organization as well as the self or stakeholders. Lastly, they engage in DCB.

### **Motivation-Based Moderators**

Given that the presence of organizationally consequential situations and conflicting interests with stakeholders are necessary but not sufficient conditions for DCB to occur, we also consider individual differences to explain its occurrence. Specifically,

we consider differences in motivation because DCB is volitional behaviour. Indeed, Baucus (1994), Umphress and Bingham (2011), and Vardi and Wiener (1996) have incorporated an array of motivational variables into their predictive models for DCB-related behaviour (e.g., OMB, corporate illegality, and UPB). They have also argued that these variables interact with each other and with organizational and environmental factors to influence how and when these behaviours occur. We integrate and synthesize previously proposed variables into only two: organizational concern and ethical sensitivity. Synthesizing motivational factors into two variables provides for a simpler, more parsimonious and more generalizable model to accompany our umbrella construct.

Consciously or subconsciously, individuals can only choose to engage in DCB if they excessively prioritize organizational objectives over legitimate stakeholder interests. That is, engaging in DCB requires that organizational members either: (i) place too much value on advancing organizational interests; or (ii) place too little value on legitimate stakeholder interests. We propose that either of these tendencies can be explained by moderator variables, organizational concern and ethical sensitivity.

*Organizational concern.* Extreme preoccupation with the pursuit of specific organizational goals or interests may occur for two distinct, but not necessarily unrelated, reasons. First, extrinsic motivators may increase individuals' concern with organizational interests and goals. The more organizational members perceive that their physical, economic, and social needs and desires (e.g., compensation, job security, status) outcomes directly depend on specific organizational outcomes, the higher priority they will place on those outcomes. As the priority of those outcomes increases, so does the likelihood that members' pattern-matching processes will attend to aspects of consequential situations related to those outcomes and, consequentially, that they will decide to engage in DCB. Our reasoning here is similar to that of both Baucus (1994) and Vardi and Wiener (1996) who proposed positive associations between instrumental motivations and DCB-related behaviour. Baucus (1994) argued that explicit or implicit reward systems based on instrumental outcomes as well as Machiavellianism – the predisposition to place highest priority on such outcomes and to choose expediency over moral principle in the pursuit thereof (Kessler, Bandelli, Spector, Borman, Nelson, & Penney, 2010) – would increase the likelihood of employees intentionally committing corporate crimes. Vardi and Wiener (1996) referred to the linkage between individual's self-interest and their organizational roles as 'instrumental forces', and also proposed that these forces would interact with other situational characteristics (e.g., deprivation) to promote intentions to engage in OMB.

Second, intrinsic motivators may increase individuals' concern with organizational interests and goals. The more organizational members tie their psychological wellbeing (i.e., self-concepts, identities) directly to organizational effectiveness, the more priority they will place on organizational objectives and

outcomes (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Again, as the priority of those outcomes and objectives increases, so does the likelihood that members' pattern-matching processes will attend to aspects of consequential situations related to those outcomes and, consequentially, that they will decide to engage in DCB provided the opportunity to do so. This logic echoes that of Baucus (1994), Dukerich, Kramer, and Parks (1998), and Umphress and colleagues (Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress et al., 2010) who all proposed potential associations between psychological phenomenon such as organizational commitment and identity, and unacceptable behaviour. Baucus (1994) proposed that organizational commitment could promote deliberate illegal acts, especially in cultures in which such behaviour is positively reinforced. Similarly, Umphress et al. (2010) reasoned that individuals whose identity is substantially derived from their organizational membership would be more likely to engage in UPB, especially if they felt a sense of reciprocal obligation to their organizations. Their data, however, showed that only the interaction of identification and felt reciprocal obligation predicted UPB (i.e., organizational identification alone was insufficient).

A relatively new and potentially powerful construct can capture both the instrumental and psychological motivations behind DCB. *Organizational concern* (OC) is defined as the 'desire by the participants for the company to do well and a desire for the participants to show pride in and commitment to the organization' (Rioux & Penner, 2001: 1307). Rioux and Penner added that 'OC motives . . . have two interrelated components: a desire to help the organization because one identifies with and takes pride in the organization and because it is seen as being committed to one's [own] welfare' (1312). If, however, self-interest often causes individuals to ignore 'the possible harm an act might cause another or the merit of a competing interest' (Bersoff, 1999: 415), then individuals higher in OC should be more likely to place organizational interests ahead of other concerns (Penner & Finkelstein, 2004; Rioux & Penner, 2001). Moreover, as combined instrumental and psychological interests increase, so will the tendency to subjectively interpret situations in biased ways that favor themselves and their organizations and to adopt consensual thinking (i.e., norms) regarding behaviours (Hastorf & Cantril, 1954).

We posit that OC can influence all three psychological processes that mediate the relationship between consequential situations and DCB (see Fig. 1). OC should first influence the prototype matching processes. As OC increases so should the probability that prototype matching processes will match situational characteristics to prototypes for opportunities for organizational advancement or threats to organizational wellbeing. Following recognition of an organizationally consequential situation, responses will follow either a reflexive evaluative or proactive innovative decision-making process. With respect to the former, the type (positive/negative) and degree of reflexive judgment, emotional reaction, and behavioural judgment should all depend on the individual's OC. Compared to individuals who have low OC, individuals who have high OC should have more intensely positive judgments, emotions, and behavioural intentions when perceiving

opportunities to advance organizational interests and similarly more intensely negative psychological responses when perceiving organizational threats. With respect to proactive innovation decision-making processes, OC should influence the type of ideas validated. Compared to organizational members who have low OC, members who have high OC should place greater importance on the promotion of organizational interests and less importance on other criteria (e.g., stakeholder interests) when evaluating behavioural options. In summary, the preceding discussion leads to our first proposition:

*Proposition 1: OC will moderate the relationship between consequential situations and the decision-making processes leading to DCB. Specifically, individuals will be more likely to progress through the decision-making stages leading to DCB when they have higher rather than lower levels of OC.*

*Ethical sensitivity.* Apart from high concern with the organization, a lack of reasonable concern for legitimate stakeholder interests is the other condition under which individuals would be more likely to choose to engage in DCB. In contrast with the self-evident fact that self-interest is innate and automatic (Krebs & Denton, 2005; Murnighan et al., 2001), sensitivity to others' interests is a function of individual disposition (Eisenberg et al., 1989), socialization (Kohlberg, 1969), and situational cognition (Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008; Murnighan et al., 2001). Without this sensitivity, individuals will be more likely to overlook moral implications in situations and, thus, to engage in unacceptable conduct at work, like DCB.

Consistent with this reasoning, Baucus (1994), Vardi and Wiener (1996), and Umphress and Bingham (2011) have included stages of cognitive moral development (Kohlberg, 1969) in their predictive models of DCB-type behaviour. Though they all agree that post-conventional individuals (i.e., those who judge right and wrong based on independent moral principles) would be least likely to engage in such conduct, they have presented different arguments with respect to individuals who operate with lower levels of cognitive moral development. Baucus (1994) proposed that individuals at the pre-conventional stage would be more likely to engage in intentional corporate illegality due to their self-interested focus without regard to others. In contrast, Vardi and Wiener (1996) and Umphress and Bingham (2011) argued that individuals at the conventional stage would be most likely to ignore the impact of their actions on external stakeholders due to preoccupation with their social groups' outcomes and expectations. Considering that individuals can take actions that benefit their organizations and themselves (Vardi & Wiener, 1996), both positions certainly have merit.

To reconcile the foregoing conceptualizations, we introduce a second moderator variable in our model that subsumes and goes beyond cognitive moral development. *Ethical sensitivity* (ES) is the propensity 'to recognize that a decision-making situation has ethical content and ...' to ascribe '...importance to the ethical issues composing that content' (Sparks & Hunt, 1998: 95). ES overcomes concerns

regarding cognitive moral development (Krebs & Denton, 2005) because it can account for psychological states as well as traits. Although EDM researchers have traditionally viewed ethical sensitivity as a trait that varied *across* individuals based on genetics and socialization (Shaub, Finn, & Munter, 1993; Sparks & Hunt, 1998), recent behavioural research suggests that ES also varies *within* individuals. Specifically, Gino and Margolis (2011) and Mazar et al. (2008) demonstrated that the salience and framing of ethical standards as well as one's own recent ethical decisions influences ethical behaviour. Hence, we propose that ethical sensitivity plays two key roles in decisions to engage in DCB.

First, ES determines whether or not individuals recognize the moral implications (i.e., achieve moral awareness) in situations and in their responses to those situations (Reynolds, 2006a, 2006b). Recognition of such moral implications is important in this context because ES influences the prototype matching process. As ES decreases so does the likelihood that moral implications in situations enter conscious awareness. Compared to those with high ES, individuals low in ES are more likely to respond reflexively to situations solely based on their own or, in cases of high OC, the organization's interests (i.e., without taking legitimate stakeholders' interests into account). Conversely, as ES increases so does the salience of moral aspects of situations and the likelihood that controlled reasoning processes take over. Though recent research suggests that decision-makers under such controlled processes are less likely to take unethical action (Mazar et al., 2008; Reynolds, 2006a), conscious awareness of ethical implications does not eliminate the potential for unethical action (e.g., the Royal Caribbean sailors in the opening vignette).

ES also influences how individuals deliberately make decisions in response to ethically charged situations that have entered their conscious awareness. ES influences the likelihood of decision-makers engaging in 'effortful problem solving' to resolve ethically complex situations in which interests conflict (Hunt & Vitell, 1993; Sparks & Hunt, 1998; see also Kunda, 1990). More ethically sensitive individuals are more likely to use their scarce resources (i.e., time, money, and energy) to reconcile organizational and stakeholder interests. Compared to those with high ES, individuals low in ES are more likely to generate and validate ideas that would violate legitimate stakeholder interests. Therefore, we offer the following proposition:

*Proposition 2: Ethical sensitivity will moderate the relationship between consequential situations and the decision-making processes leading to DCB. Specifically, individuals will be more likely to progress through the decision-making stages leading to DCB when they have lower rather than higher levels of ethical sensitivity.*

## CONSEQUENCES OF DCB

Models that explain the occurrence of unethical and other problematic forms of organizational behaviour abound in the literature (e.g., Haidt, 2000; Jones, 1991;

Rest, 1986; Reynolds, 2006a; Sonenshein, 2007; Umphress & Bingham, 2007). Conversely, models explaining the consequences of such behaviour are largely absent, except Umphress and Bingham's model that explains the psychological consequences of engaging in UPB (e.g., guilt, shame, and cognitive dissonance). Here we propose a model to fill this gap in the literature.

Figure 2 is a graphic representation of the processes through which DCB consequences unfold over time across individual, organizational, and societal levels of analysis. Our model describes how stakeholders react in response to detecting or otherwise becoming aware of DCB and the unacceptable impact it has on their interests. As awareness of violations of shared interests brings stakeholders together, their collective reactions lead to negative outcomes for organizations, their members, and the societies to which they belong. We base our model on instrumental stakeholder theory (IST) (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jones, 1995).

According to IST, stakeholders reciprocate specific firm actions (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jones, 1995). That is, stakeholders react positively to firm actions they perceive as positive and negatively to firm actions they perceive as negative. These stakeholder reactions make or break firms, which are essentially the sum-total of their relationships with stakeholders (i.e., nexuses of explicit and implicit contracts; Jensen & Meckling, 1976). How firms uphold or break their explicit and implicit contracts with stakeholders, in turn, affects the societies to which they belong as well (Jones, 1995). When parties to explicit or implicit contracts engage in opportunistic behaviours, like DCB, they not only undermine the trust held by the injured parties, but also the general sense of and willingness to trust among those who learn the potential for such behaviours. As trust diminishes, economic actors (e.g., stakeholders) perceive a greater need for regulation and monitoring to protect their interests. Increasing regulation and monitoring through governmental or other third-party interventions introduce otherwise unnecessary transaction costs that societal members ultimately have to bear (Noreen, 1988).

Next we discuss how detection of DCB's immediate consequences triggers initial stakeholder reactions, and how these reactions lead to activation of stakeholder networks (Rowley, 1997) and multi-level consequences. We explain how activated stakeholder networks can trigger outcomes that negatively affect individuals, organizations, and societies.

### **Stakeholder Detection**

Stakeholders can only react to behaviours of which they are cognizant (Rowley & Berman, 2000). Consequently, detection of DCB by one or more internal or external stakeholders serves as the trigger for these reactions. In some cases, stakeholder detection occurs inevitably by the nature of the DCB. For example, it was impossible for Savana Redding to be oblivious to her strip search or for community members to ignore a fatal experiment that literally blew up in the faces of Rockwell scientists (Knight, 1996). In other cases, stakeholders inadvertently discover DCB. DCB may

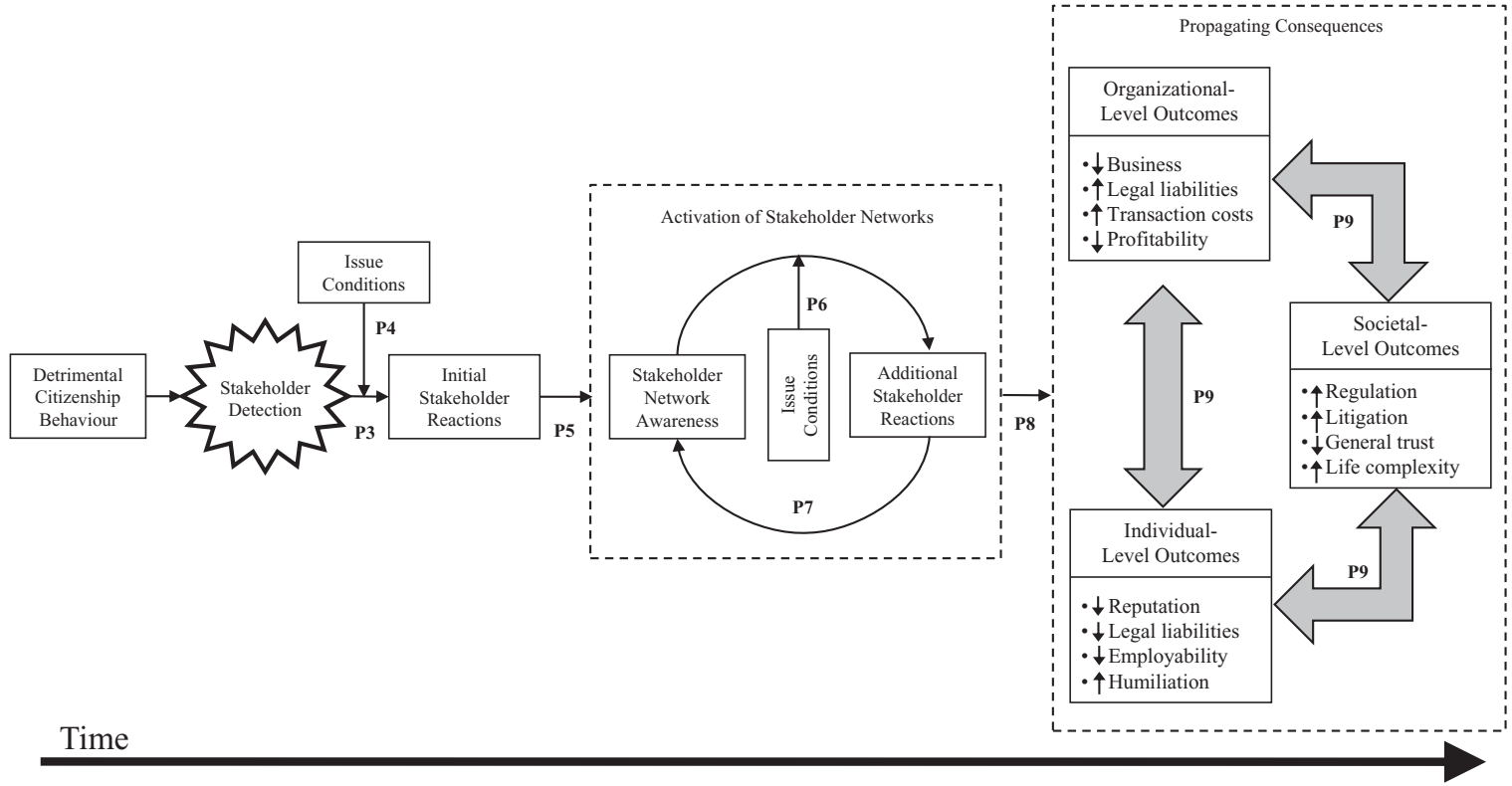


Figure 2. Unfolding multi-level model of Detrimental Citizenship Behaviour's consequences



temporarily have positive consequences for organizations until stakeholders detect it. For instance, as long as the Coast Guard inspectors believed the engineers' ruse regarding the oil slick, Royal Caribbean remained free from incrimination. After stakeholders detect DCB, however, the process through which stakeholders take retaliatory actions against organizations and their employees begins. Thus, we propose:

*Proposition 3: Stakeholder detection of DCB will serve as a mediating mechanism of the relationship between DCB and initial stakeholder reactions to DCB.*

### **Issue Conditions and Initial Stakeholder Reactions**

Once stakeholders detect DCB, they react to it. The relationship between detection and initial reactions, in turn, depends on the *issue conditions* (Rowley & Berman, 2000) associated with the DCB. Issue conditions include perceptions regarding the magnitude, nature, and distribution of the harm and relationships to those affected by the DCB (Jones, 1991). Thus, the more stakeholders perceive that DCB violates their physical (e.g., harming persons or property), psychological (e.g., causing psychological distress, violating psychological contracts), philosophical (e.g., contradicting values and beliefs such as 'school officials have no right to strip search students'), or relational (i.e., bringing harm to relevant others) concerns, the more negatively and strongly they are likely to react to it. Hence we propose,

*Proposition 4: Issue conditions will moderate the relationship between stakeholder detection of DCB and initial stakeholder reactions. Specifically, more negative issue-related perceptions will lead to more numerous and intense negative initial reactions compared to less negative issue-related perceptions.*

### **Activation of Stakeholder Networks**

Most stakeholders are limited in the amount of influence they individually hold over organizations. Independent entities (employees, customers, vendors) typically have too little power to independently mete out meaningful retribution (cf. Hosmer & Kiewitz, 2005). Rather, stakeholders collectively determine the behaviours and fates of organizations through the formal and informal networks to which they belong (Rowley, 1997). That is, stakeholders work through their formal or informal stakeholder networks to seek retribution or remedy. The subsequent activation of stakeholder networks will lead to increased stakeholder awareness regarding the DCB. In some cases, stakeholders bring DCB to the attention of their informal stakeholder networks for the purposes of inducing reputational damage (cf. Fombrun, 1996) or retaliation by proxy. Indeed, it is quite natural and common for adversely affected stakeholders to report subversion of their interests (e.g., DCB) to others through a variety of channels including their social networks, the news media, and the Internet (Noon & Delbridge, 1993). In other cases, stakeholders

may pursue specific resolutions by reporting DCB through formal channels such as through professional networks (e.g., the Bar Association), regulatory agencies (e.g., the Federal Trade Commission), or consumer advocacy groups (e.g., the Better Business Bureau). In short:

*Proposition 5: Initial stakeholder reactions to DCB will lead to the activation of stakeholder networks.*

Activation of stakeholder networks is a function of overall stakeholder awareness of and reactions to DCB. The more stakeholders are aware of DCB, the more likely one or more of them will react to it. The strength of stakeholder-network activation depends on stakeholder perceptions of DCB. As with initial stakeholder detection, the issue conditions – stakeholder perceptions regarding the magnitude, nature, and distribution of the harm and relationships to those affected by the DCB (Jones, 1991) – associated with DCB play an important moderating role in the activation of stakeholder networks (Rowley & Berman, 2000). Upon becoming aware of an instance of DCB, stakeholders decide whether to react to it or ignore it. Given that not all members of stakeholder networks share the exact same values, interests, and priorities, some will likely react strongly and immediately take action whereas others may dismiss DCB as insignificant or acceptable. For instance, though the school board considered the actions of the principal in the Redding case acceptable, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) held a different opinion and subsequently worked on behalf of the Reddings to redress the case. Thus:

*Proposition 6: Issue conditions will moderate the relationship between stakeholder network awareness of DCB and additional stakeholder reactions to it. Specifically, more negative issue-related perceptions will lead to a stronger relationship between stakeholder awareness and reactions compared to less negative issue conditions.*

Stakeholder reactions also feed back into stakeholder awareness. At a minimum, active stakeholder reactions include informing other stakeholders about DCB. That is, when newly informed stakeholders perceive that DCB has sufficiently violated their interests to merit a response, they too may use formal and informal communication channels to bring the violation to the attention of others who can directly or indirectly respond to those responsible. Thus, the more stakeholders react to DCB, the more other stakeholders will become aware of it. Increased awareness will lead to additional stakeholder reactions that, in turn, will lead to increased awareness of DCB and so on. Thus:

*Proposition 7: A positive feedback loop will exist between stakeholder awareness and stakeholder reactions. Stakeholder awareness leads to stakeholder reactions and stakeholder reactions lead to more stakeholder awareness.*

As stakeholder awareness progressively increases and more stakeholders react to DCB, stakeholder networks become progressively more activated. As stakeholder networks become increasingly activated, the networks become more powerful and

dense (Scott & Lane, 2000), and the detrimental consequences of DCB become more likely and intense.

### **Propagating Consequences of DCB**

When activation of stakeholder networks reaches critical levels, stakeholder reactions to DCB then lead to negative consequences for individuals, organizations, and the societies to which they pertain. DCB's consequences propagate through the relationships among these entities.

*Individual-level outcomes.* When stakeholders hold specific individuals responsible for DCB, such as the chief engineers and the principal in the opening vignettes, those individuals inevitably experience negative consequences. Through their networks, stakeholders may impose criminal, civil, or social penalties against perpetrators of DCB. These detrimental consequences include material (e.g., legal costs and penalties, decreased employability) as well as psychological (e.g., public humiliation) punishments for such individuals.

*Organizational-level outcomes.* When networks of stakeholders blame organizations for DCB, detrimental organizational consequences result. Immediate organizational consequences include lost business, criminal charges, civil suits, or other actions that increase transaction costs, depleting firms' scarce financial and human resources and thus ability to conduct business profitably. Less immediate yet similarly detrimental consequences occur through reputational effects that erode support from customers and potential business partners. Stakeholders who hold environmental consciousness in high regard, for example, should be less likely to engage in economic exchange with businesses like Royal Caribbean whose employees have engaged in environmentally harmful DCB (Hendry, 2006).

*Societal-level outcomes.* When stakeholders collectively respond to DCB, their reactions also lead to detrimental consequences at a societal level. Jones (1995: 413) provided a cogent explanation of how opportunistic behaviours, like DCB, can have undesirable societal implications:

At the macro-level, opportunism burdens the economy and society-at-large with substantial 'dead-weight losses' (Noreen, 1988). Prominent among these costs are economic regulation, social regulation, legal services related to contracting and post-contracting litigation, and whatever social malaise attends a lack of trust in society . . .

All of these outcomes can occur when stakeholders collectively react to DCB by engaging in self-protective and retributive behaviours.

*Propagation of detrimental consequences across levels of analysis.* Organizations, their members, and the societies to which they belong have interdependent relationships with one another. All interdependent systems by nature have the potential to experience self-reinforcing causal loops. That is, consequences in one part of the system (i.e., at the individual level) have the potential to trigger consequences at another part (i.e., at the organizational level). When these consequences go unchecked they lead to downward spirals (cf. Hambrick & D'Aveni, 1988) or vicious cycles that can lead to system destruction (Weick, 1979). In this way, the detrimental consequences of DCB at one level of analysis can lead to additional detrimental consequences at other levels up to and including the dissolution of organizations. We illustrate this potentiality with double-headed arrows in the dashed-lined box labeled 'Propagating Consequences' in Figure 2.

Stakeholder reactions that affect individual employees have implications for organizations and vice-versa because organizations and their members have highly interdependent relationships. Thus, any stakeholder reactions to DCB that demand the attention and resources of organizations or their members cause both organizational and individual performance to suffer. Indeed, criminal prosecutions, civil litigation, or other reputation damaging actions force organizations and their members to dedicate valuable time and money to legal defense and 'damage control' that would otherwise go towards achievement of their primary organizational objectives and roles (e.g., educating students, providing cruises). In such situations, human and other resources may be redirected or stretched beyond capacity (e.g., employee burnout from performing multiple roles) just to sustain normal operations.

Individual and organizational outcomes can have societal implications just as societal changes affect individuals and organizations. On the one hand, changes in regulatory and economic environments (e.g., the Sarbanes-Oxley Act) affect how and how well individuals and organizations conduct business. In some cases, the introduction of regulation constrains or precludes certain business activities. Overly burdensome regulations inhibit economic activities in two ways: (i) they increase the financial and temporal costs of conducting business (Noreen, 1988); and (ii) they present barriers to entry that economic actors are unable or unwilling to overcome (Dean & Brown, 1995). On the other hand, financial and legal penalties imposed on organizations and individuals affects society in multiple ways. Society bears a direct cost to convict and punish individuals culpable of transgressing legitimate stakeholder rights because the costs of maintaining and staffing enforcement agencies (e.g., the Coast Guard), the courts, and prisons are ultimately born by taxpayers. More indirectly, lack of entrants into markets limits competition and reduces market efficiencies. Similarly, resources dedicated to managing fallout from DCB diminish organizations' ability to serve their constituencies by limiting their ability to achieve their economically and socially valuable missions. We offer the following propositions with respect to DCB's propagating consequences:

*Proposition 8: Activation of stakeholder networks will lead to negative consequences at the individual, organizational, and societal levels of analysis.*

*Proposition 9: The negative consequences of DCB will propagate and magnify across the individual, organizational, and societal levels of analysis.*

## DISCUSSION

A proliferation of headlines, exposés, and biographical dramas features scandalous employee behaviours committed with the intention of advancing organizational objectives. Studying why, when, and how such behaviours are likely to occur and their consequences for internal and external organizational stakeholders has provided the opportunity for organizational behaviour scholars (Baucus, 1994; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Vardi & Wiener, 1996) to study a topic of high relevance for society (cf. Cascio & Aguinis, 2008; Hambrick, 1994; Weick, 2007). Our article extends these efforts by integrating extant theoretical frameworks for this problematic class of behaviour under the umbrella of DCB. We offer a dual decision-making model to account for the factors that lead to DCB (Fig. 1) and a separate model for the processes through which DCB's consequences unfold over time (Fig. 2).

In this section, we assess the extent to which our conceptual analysis and propositions are useful for understanding the underlying processes involved in the vignettes described at the beginning of the article, for three purposes: (i) to demonstrate that our models for DCB have origins in the real world (Dubin, 1976); (ii) to engage in a much-needed science–practice dialogue in management and organization studies (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008); and (iii) to illustrate how these behaviours fit under the common DCB umbrella, but also could be conceptualized using different constructs (i.e., workplace deviance, organizational misbehaviour, corporate crime and corruption, unethical pro-organizational behaviour). Finally, we discuss implications of the DCB construct for research and practice.

### Using the DCB Framework to Understand Sailors Obstructing Justice

Destroying evidence and concocting a fictitious story to explain the oil slick to regulators satisfy our criteria for DCB. Such acts: (i) are discretionary (i.e., no companies formally direct or train their employees to obstruct justice); (ii) are pro-organizational (i.e., avoiding prosecution protects organizational profits and reputation); and (iii) unreasonably undermine legitimate stakeholder interests (i.e., subverting the enforcement of environmental regulations facilitates immeasurable ecological damage; Klein, 2005).

Referring to Figure 1, we can now understand the sailors' decisions to take these actions. The sailors encountered a consequential situation when the Coast Guard announced that they would investigate the oil slick coming from the ship. High OC

and low ES likely led the sailors to progress through a decision-making process that led them to obstruct justice (Propositions 1 and 2). It is likely that the sailors had a high level of OC because their bonuses depended on keeping expenses within budgets that excluded the cost of proper bilge waste disposal (Stieghorst, 1999). The engineers had shown low ES by intentionally dumping bilge waste (the source of the oil slick), which they clearly understood as illegal. Lack of a prototype solution to their problem required that they consciously and deliberately engage in a proactive innovation decision-making process through which they drew on their knowledge of the ships' systems and problems it could suffer, generated potential responses, and validated the options that involved hiding the illegal bypass system and lying about the cause of the oil slick.

Referring to Figure 2, we can understand the processes through which stakeholder reactions to the sailors' actions led to detrimental consequences at multiple levels. As stated by Propositions 3 and 4, this process starts when a stakeholder detects and initially reacts to DCB, and the strength of reaction depends on the issue conditions. In this situation, detection occurred when the Coast Guard discovered the true reason for the oil slick and the perceived severity of the offence fueled a proportionally strong reaction from them. Specifically, they informed their superiors (Proposition 5) who, being similarly influenced by the issue conditions, reported the incident to other members of the federal environmental protection bureaucracy (i.e., the US Attorney General, the Environmental Protection Agency) (Proposition 6). The members of those agencies informed additional interested parties internal and external to those agencies (e.g., the courts, media) leading to further activation of the stakeholder network (Proposition 7). Once sufficiently activated, the stakeholder network began penalizing the individuals responsible (e.g., criminal indictments) and the organization (e.g., \$27 million in fines, damaged reputation) (Proposition 8). Royal Caribbean also lost dedicated engineers who were charged with obstruction of justice. The incident received widespread media attention that contributed to negative public sentiment regarding the cruise industry and calls for increased regulation and sanctioning of it (Proposition 8). In response, and illustrating the propagation of consequences across levels (Proposition 9), Royal Caribbean installed environmental compliance officers, an action that changed how employees work, added overhead costs borne by customers, and may have influenced other cruise lines to take similar symbolic actions.

### **Using the DCB Framework to Understand Safford Unified School District vs. Redding**

Strip searching a 13-year-old student to enforce 'zero-tolerance' drug policies also satisfies our criteria for DCB. Such acts: (i) are discretionary (i.e., school boards do not formally require administrators to strip search students); (ii) are pro-organizational (i.e., they are consistent with enforcing school policies); and

(iii) unreasonably undermine legitimate stakeholder interests (i.e., induce unnecessary emotional trauma and violate civil rights).

Our decision-making model (see Fig. 1) allows us to explain why Savana Redding's principal strip-searched her. The principal faced an organizationally consequential situation because (alleged) student possession of illegal drugs threatens the welfare of students and creates a potential legal liability for the school. The principal likely had a high level of OC due to interest in how the situation could impact him directly (e.g., liability if a medical emergency resulted) or indirectly by threatening his identity as the school's leader (cf. Dukerich et al., 1998) (Proposition 1). In addition, the principal lacked the ES needed to give Ms Redding's rights and psychological wellbeing proper consideration in his response (Proposition 2).

Following Figure 2, we can understand how the principal's actions led to a number of immediate and far-reaching consequences. Owing to the direct nature of the DCB in this case, Ms Redding was instantly aware that her rights were violated when the principal ordered the strip search (Proposition 3). She responded in a manner proportional to its perceived severity (Proposition 4) by complaining to her mother (i.e., another stakeholder) (Proposition 5). Again, the severity of the offence intensified the reaction from Redding's mother who contacted the ACLU (Proposition 6). By suing, the ACLU notified a number of other stakeholders (e.g., the courts, the media) who also reacted to the matter (Proposition 7). The combined reactions of these stakeholders led to the defendants expending scarce resources (i.e., time and money) to defend themselves in losing battles in the courts of law and public opinion (Liptak, 2009) (Proposition 8). Additionally, news of the Redding incident and similar cases have put additional and unwanted pressures on public education systems. Increased sensitivity to potential mistreatment of children leads to intense scrutiny of educator actions. Over time, this scrutiny strains education systems and distracts their members from making their primary contribution to society (i.e., educating children) (Proposition 8). Thus, the detrimental consequences propagated across individual, organizational, and societal levels (Proposition 9).

### **Using the DCB Framework to Understand Managers Mislabelling Pork Products**

Mislabelling food packaging meets our three criteria for DCB. Such acts: (i) are discretionary (i.e., no companies formally direct or train their employees to use deceptive labeling); (ii) are pro-organizational (i.e., commanding higher prices for the same product increases revenues); and (iii) unreasonably undermine legitimate stakeholder interests (i.e., deceptive labelling constitutes fraud).

Referring to Figure 1, we can explain why the managers mislabelled the pork products. A combination of higher customer demand for 'green' (i.e., organic) pork products and spoilage of slower-selling conventional pork products presented the managers with an organizationally consequential situation. High OC and low ES likely led the managers to progress through a decision-making process resulted in



selling conventional pork as organic to increase revenues (Propositions 1 & 2). The managers likely had high OC owing to performance-based incentives, their identity with (i.e., sense of duty to) their employer, or a combination thereof. However, the managers also likely lacked the levels of ES necessary to put lawful practices before profit. In this particular situation, the managers likely had an available prototype for their 'solution'; misrepresenting facts is a common response to achieve instrumental gain (Boles, Croson, & Murnighan, 2000).

Figure 2 illustrates how the consequences of this deceptive tactic unfolded over time. The initial stakeholder detection happened when an attentive consumer suspected that deliberate mislabelling had occurred in the store (Proposition 3). The severity of the issue in the customer's mind fuelled the decision to complain to government authorities (Proposition 4) who, based on the merits of the case (Proposition 5), launched an investigation (Proposition 6). The members of those agencies informed additional parties (e.g., the courts, media) leading to further activation of the stakeholder network (Proposition 7). The investigation led to undesirable consequences for the managers (e.g., detention and formal arrests) and the company (e.g., fines, lost sales, and damaged reputation) (Proposition 8). This case also adds to a long list of credibility-damaging scandals that, by recent estimates, costs the Chinese economy \$92 billion per year in lost business (China Economic Review, 2011) (Proposition 8). The combined consequences also propagated across levels (Proposition 9). The Chinese government has had to devote resources to regulatory activities, such as imposing shutdowns that adversely affect employees and customers.

### **DCB across Cultures**

We have illustrated that DCB and the consequences that it brings occur in a wide range of cultural (both organizational and national) contexts. Our models consistently explain both the incidence and consequence of DCB in these various contexts. Consequently, we conclude that DCB is a global, cross-culturally invariant phenomenon (Aguinis & Henle, 2003) and, thus, one that should thus concern citizens globally, including China (Van de Ven & Jing, 2012). We, however, recognize that cultural factors may influence the frequency and manner in which DCB occurs in organizations.

We recommend that future research consider how cultural factors impact DCB's incidence and consequences. Given DCB's ethical tone, an obvious starting point for future investigations would be cultural values. Cultural value differences relate to how individuals and groups, including nations, prioritize means and ends differently. Moreover, a number of major investigations have revealed several universals in cultural value differences (see Aguinis & Henle, 2003 for a review).

One potential starting point would be for future research to examine how the individualism–collectivism and masculinity–femininity value dimensions established by Hofstede (1980) and replicated by others (e.g., Schwartz, 1992, 1994)

relate to DCB. These two dimensions are particularly relevant because the former pertains to how individuals and groups prioritize collective (e.g., organizational) interest and the latter pertains to how they prioritize instrumental (e.g., profits, power, and status) relative to social (e.g., social harmony, and the care and wellbeing of others) concerns. DCB seems likely, therefore, when collectivistic and masculine values are high because the former will increase organizational concern (see Proposition 1) and the latter will diminish ethical sensitivity (Proposition 2). China has its own unique cultural traditions (Pan, Rowney, & Peterson, 2012). Advances in DCB research would benefit from investigating the role of cultural values that are both universal across cultures and that are specific to specific contexts like that of China.

Another potential area for exploration is the role of cultural norms. Norms may play an even bigger role in organizational behaviour than values (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007). Moreover, a growing body of literature suggests that perceptions of what others are thinking and doing plays an important role in ethical behaviour, particularly in competitive contexts (e.g., Pierce, Kilduff, Galinsky, & Sivanathan, in press). To further understand the role of norms in organizational behaviour across cultures, future research could examine both values and norms as predictors of DCB.

### **Additional Implications for Future DCB Research**

The next step is to advance DCB theory through both empirical and theoretical work.

*Empirical work on DCB theory.* Such validation requires three types of activities. First, future research could extend previous efforts to identify and isolate DCB in field settings. Previous research has provided good starting points upon which to base these efforts. For instance, some have shown that both media reports and surveys of organizational members can be used to identify DCB (Baucus & Baucus, 1997; Umphress et al., 2010). However, these two approaches lie at opposite extremes with respect to specificity and are consequently limited for testing our theoretical models. A more balanced approach would be to establish behavioural exemplars for use in laboratory and field settings. Establishing behavioural exemplars, however, may be a labour-intensive task because numerous forms of DCB may be context-specific. Therefore, we recommend adopting the approach of Skarlicki and Folger (1997), who used a qualitative–quantitative two-pass approach to study retaliatory discretionary employee behaviours. In the first pass, they developed a list of exemplars based on incidents described by a representative subpopulation. In the second pass, they asked an independent group to rate peers using an exemplar-based behavioural observation scale.

Once sufficient behavioural exemplars have been established, the next step is to test the predictive validity of the moderated relationships we proposed in

Propositions 1 and 2. Validation thereof will lead to additional opportunities such as a comparison of the relative validity of our propositions (e.g., Proposition 1) with similar propositions included in other frameworks (e.g., the interaction of organizational identification and positive reciprocation examined by Umphress et al., 2010).

To conduct such tests, we encourage the use of both controlled laboratory and field research. Scenario- and simulation-based laboratory studies would be very useful for confirming the decision-making processes leading to DCB because they allow for manipulation of time and other factors (e.g., incentives) (Reynolds, 2006a). Moreover, simulations could induce DCB as has been done with other forms of citizenship (Wright, George, Farnsworth, & McMahan, 1993). Finally, as Umphress and colleagues (2010) have shown, how eLancing can provide the benefits of both controlled laboratory and field research when confirming proposed relationships between antecedents and DCB. eLancing enables researchers to overcome common limitations (e.g., generalizability) by recruiting participants and creating virtual research environments, including field experiments, using the Internet (see Aguinis & Lawal, 2012 for a discussion).

Third, we see opportunities to test our model of DCB's consequences as depicted in Figure 2. To date, the literature includes examinations of both the short- and long-term consequences for accusations of and convictions for corporate crime (Baucus & Baucus, 1997; Davidson & Worrell, 1988). Although these studies suggest that firms suffer little, if any, more than the fines to which they are sentenced in courts, questions remain regarding the actual impact of corporate illegality on firm performance (Pierce, 2008).<sup>[1]</sup> Examining these effects is clearly an area for future research that requires improved research methods. One possibility is to conduct event studies that examine stock market reactions to other forms of DCB besides corporate illegality. In addition, the same experimental contexts in which simulated DCB could be induced can also induce stakeholder reactions to such behaviour. For example, game theoretic scenarios with reward and punishment options (Fehr & Gächter, 2000; Wang, 2007) may serve as useful metaphors for discretionary employee behaviours, like DCB, and responses to them. In addition, simulations in computer laboratories (see Bachrach, Bendoly, & Podsakoff, 2001 for a simple example) or by means of eLancing (Aguinis & Lawal, 2012) may provide more realistic contexts in which individuals make decisions in simulated organizational and stakeholder roles as they would in real-world settings.

*DCB theory expansions.* We based our predictive model and propositions for the occurrence of DCB largely on individual decision-making processes. In this model, two individual-level variables, organizational concern and ethical sensitivity, moderate the relationship between organizationally consequential situations and these decision-making processes. Thus, it may appear as though we neglected to thoroughly address organizational- and cross-level issues in the decision-making process leading to DCB. We expect, however, that most organizational-level factors

will influence decisions to engage in DCB through our two primary individual-level moderator variables, organizational concern and ethical sensitivity. Future research can explore how contextual factors such as organizational culture, policies, and human resource management strategies (e.g., performance management, training) directly or indirectly (i.e., through organizational concern) influence decisions to engage DCB. Indeed, it is critical that we gain a better understanding of how organizations encourage or discourage DCB. If both detrimental and pro-social forms of citizenship stem from similar pro-organizational motives as we have proposed, it is possible that leaders can simultaneously encourage or discourage both and the important, yet opposite, consequences that accompany them.

### **Implications for Practice**

Owing to its consequences for individuals, organizations, and society, DCB has great relevance for practice. By expanding the dialogue about this highly relevant issue, we continue attempts (e.g., Umphress & Bingham, 2011) to bridge the much-lamented science–practice gap (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008) in three ways. First, we have put additional attention on a problematic form of discretionary employee behaviour (i.e., DCB). Unlike other types of organizational behaviour (e.g., task performance, OCB, CWB) that managers routinely influence and observe, DCB may occur frequently and without managerial awareness. Thus, managers may overlook the potential for DCB and their need to militate against it until it is too late and stakeholders have already taken actions against the firm. As media reports repeatedly demonstrate, the powerful contrasts created by these intentionally beneficial, but ultimately harmful behaviours demonstrate the need for managerial attention. We hope the DCB idea will provoke thought and dialogue about this consequential form of organizational behaviour (cf. Lundberg, 2004).

Second, our framework also promotes dialogue regarding a more general, yet complex managerial challenge: how to motivate employees to use their initiative to pursue organizational objectives (i.e., engage in organizational citizenship) without going too far. Indeed, wise managers would presumably encourage employees to singlehandedly pursue organizational objectives, but discourage them from harming others, or otherwise violating ethical standards, in the process (Pinto et al., 2008). Yet effectively doing so requires that managers understand which factors influence employees to engage in discretionary behaviour of all forms and how consequential each can be. Paradoxically, similar factors (i.e., organizational concern) can influence decisions to engage in both morally acceptable and unacceptable forms of discretionary behaviour. Therefore, managers may find themselves inadvertently either encouraging or discouraging both OCB and DCB when they would ideally promote the former and suppress the latter. To face this challenge for practice, there is a need for clearly developed and supported theories to inform managerial decisions. Our framework constitutes a first step in this direction by integrating theories regarding discretionary employee behaviour.

Finally, we have endeavoured to make DCB's broader implications salient to provide the impetus for organizational leaders and policymakers to adopt a more proactive approach to managing it. Indeed, these implications can be complex, unexpected, and drastic. While the individuals in the examples of DCB we provided were highly focused on the immediate implications of their circumstances, it is clear that the implications of their actions went far beyond the four walls of their organizations.

## CONCLUSION

Reports in the media reveal that organizational members regularly engage in behaviours intended to benefit their organizations yet have detrimental consequences for individuals, their organizations, and societies. In response to these broad implications, management scholars have proposed a range of constructs and theories to understand, the nature, causes, and consequences of these behaviours. We proposed the construct of detrimental citizenship behaviour and overarching explanatory models to unify and extend these related frameworks under one common theoretical umbrella. We hope our theoretical framework, as well as future developments on this topic, will facilitate and inform continued dialogue among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers about this important topic.

## NOTES

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**Jason R. Pierce** ([jason.pierce@uai.cl](mailto:jason.pierce@uai.cl)) is an assistant professor of Organizational Behaviour at Adolfo Ibáñez University, in Santiago, Chile. He earned his Ph.D. in management from the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University. His research interests include the causes and consequences of discretionary employee behaviour and management education.

**Herman Aguinis** ([haguinis@indiana.edu](mailto:haguinis@indiana.edu)) is the Dean's Research Professor, a Professor of Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources, and the Founding Director of the Institute for Global Organizational Effectiveness in the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University. He has held visiting appointments at universities in China, Malaysia, Singapore, Argentina, France, Spain, Puerto Rico, Australia, and South Africa. He has published five books and more than 100 journal articles addressing human resource management, organizational behaviour, and research methods and analysis topics.

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